

## **RDA Educational Program Regulations – Effective 5/30/03**

### **1070. Approval of Registered Dental Assistant Educational Programs.**

(a) It is the intent of the board to approve only those educational programs for registered dental assisting which continuously maintain a high quality standard of instruction. Initial or continued approval shall be contingent upon compliance with these regulations.

(b) An educational program for registered dental assistants is one which has as its primary purpose providing post-secondary education in registered dental assisting and which encompasses educational training in the settings, foundation and application of all duties, functions and responsibilities assignable under these regulations to registered dental assistants. All approved programs shall include approved courses in coronal polishing and radiation safety pursuant to Sections 1014, 1014.1, and 1086(d)(15), but are not required to offer a course in the removal of excess cement from coronal surfaces of teeth under orthodontic treatment by means of an ultrasonic scaler.

(c) Each program shall apply for approval prior to operation. The board may approve, provisionally approve, or deny approval of any such program. The board may, in lieu of conducting its own investigation, accept the findings of any commission or accreditation agency approved by the board and adopt those findings as its own. If a negative evaluation is made, the specific reasons therefore shall be provided to the program by the board in writing within 90 days after such negative evaluation was made.

(d) The processing times for RDA educational program approval are set forth in Section 1069. Each approved program shall be re-evaluated approximately every five years, but is subject to re-evaluation at any time if the board has reason to believe that the program may have violated these regulations.

(e) Program records shall be subject to inspection by the board at any time.

Note: Authority cited: Section 1614, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Section-1753, Business and Professions Code.

### **1070.1 Definitions**

As used in Section 1070.2:

(a) "Didactic instruction" means lectures, demonstrations, and other instruction without active participation by students.

(b) "Laboratory or Pre-clinical instruction" means instruction in which students receive supervised experience performing functions using study models, manikins, or other simulation methods.

(c) "Clinical Externship instruction" means instruction in which students receive supervised experience in performing functions in the clinical setting on patients.

Note: Authority cited: Section 1614, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections-1753, Business and Professions Code.

### **1070.2 Requirements for Registered Dental Assistant Educational Programs.**

The following minimum criteria shall be met for a registered dental assistant educational program to secure and maintain approval by the Board. Additional requirements may be stipulated when deemed necessary by the Board:

(a) Educational Setting. The program shall be established at the post-secondary educational level, or deemed equivalent thereto by the Board.

(b) Advisory Committee. Programs shall have an advisory committee consisting of an equal number of registered dental assistants and dentists, including at least two registered dental assistants and two dentists, all currently licensed by the Board. The advisory committee shall

meet at least once each academic year with the program director, faculty and appropriate institutional personnel to monitor the ongoing quality and performance of the program. Programs that admit students at different phases shall meet at least twice each year.

(c) Administration/Faculty. Adequate provision for the supervision and operation of the program shall be made. The program must be staffed by faculty who are well-qualified in curricular subject matter, dental assisting functions, and educational methodology.

(1) The program director and each faculty member shall possess a valid, active, current license issued by the Board, and shall have a background in and current knowledge of dental assisting and registered dental assisting duties. A registered dental assistant faculty member shall possess certification in coronal polishing and radiation safety, and shall have been licensed as a registered dental assistant for at least four years.

(2) Effective two years after the effective date of this regulation, each faculty member shall have received a certificate of completion of an COMDA approved course in teaching methodology of at least 60 hours at a post-secondary institution prior to student instruction.

(3) Student contact hour loads must allow the faculty sufficient time for class preparation, student evaluation and counseling, and development of subject content and appropriate evaluation criteria and methods.

(4) The program director must have the education, background, and occupational experience necessary to understand and fulfill the program goals. He or she shall have teaching responsibilities which are less than those of a full-time faculty member. He/she shall actively participate in and be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the program including the following:

(A) Providing daily guidance of didactic, laboratory and clinical assignments.

(B) Maintaining for a period of not less than 5 years:

(1) Copies of curricula, course outlines, objectives, and grading criteria.

(2) Copies of faculty credentials, licenses, and certifications.

(3) Individual student records, including those necessary to establish satisfactory completion of all phases of the program, including clinical externship.

(4) Copies of minutes of all advisory committee meetings.

(C) Informing the Board of any changes to the program content, physical facilities, and/or faculty, at least 30 days prior to such change.

(D) Participating in budget preparation and fiscal administration, curriculum development and coordination, determination of teaching assignments, supervision and evaluation of faculty, establishment of mission criteria and procedures, design and operation of program facilities, and selection of extra-mural facilities and coordination of instruction in such facilities.

(E) Holding periodic faculty meetings to provide for subject matter correlation and curriculum evaluation, and to coordinate activities of full-time, part-time, and volunteer faculty.

(5) The owner and/or school administrator shall be responsible for the compliance of the program director with these regulations.

(d) Financial Resources. Sufficient financial resources to support the program and comply with these regulations shall be available. If the program or school requires approval by the California Department of Education and/or the Bureau for Private Post-secondary and Vocational Education, such approval must be obtained prior to application for Board approval by a new program and must be maintained at all times by approved programs. Failure to maintain such approval shall result in the automatic withdrawal of board approval of the program.

(e) The program shall notify the Board, within 30 days after enrollment, of the names, and expected date of graduation of all students enrolled, and shall notify the Board of the names of program graduates within 30 days of graduation.

(f) Length of Program. The program shall be of sufficient duration for the student to develop minimum competence in performing dental assistant and registered dental assistant duties, but

shall in no event be less than 720 clock hours.

(g) Evidence of Completion. A certificate, diploma, or other evidence of completion shall be issued to each student who successfully completes the program. A student shall be deemed to have successfully completed the program if the student has met all program requirements and has obtained passing scores on final written and practical examinations on all dental assistant and registered dental assistant duties.

(h) Facilities and Resources. Facilities and class scheduling shall provide each student with sufficient opportunity, with instructor supervision, to develop minimum competency in performing dental assistant and registered dental assistant duties. Such facilities shall include safe, adequate and educationally conducive:

(1) Lecture classrooms. Classroom size and equipment shall accommodate the number of students enrolled. Classrooms shall include: chalkboard or whiteboard, projection equipment, sufficient electrical outlets, adequate lighting and ventilation, and chairs and writing space for each student.

(2) Operatories. Operatories shall be sufficient in number to allow a ratio of at least one operatory for every five students at any one time, and shall be of sufficient size to accommodate an operator, a student, an instructor, and a patient at one time.

(A) Each operatory shall replicate a modern dental office containing functional equipment including: a power-operated chair for treating patients in a supine position; operator and assistant stools; dental units designed for application of current principles of dental assistant and registered dental assistant utilization; air-water syringe; adjustable light; slow-speed and high-speed handpieces; oral evacuation equipment; work surface; view box; hand-washing sink; and all other armamentarium required to instruct dental assistant and registered dental assistant duties.

(B) Each operatory shall contain one training manikin with simulated face and tongue, full dentition, and water retrieval system.

(C) Each operatory must be of sufficient size to accommodate an operator, a student, an instructor, and a patient.

(3) Laboratories. The location and number of general use equipment, such as lathes, model trimmers, and vibrators shall assure that each student has the access necessary to develop minimum competency in performing all dental assistant and registered dental assistant duties. Protective eyewear is required for each piece of equipment. During laboratory procedures, dental rotary equipment are required in the ratio of at least one for every three students, model trimmers in the ratio of at least one for every seven students, and vibrators in the ratio of at least one for every three students.

(4) Library. Provision shall be made for reasonable access to current and diverse dental/medical reference texts, current journals, audio visual materials and other necessary resources. Library holdings shall include: nutrition, oral health education, preventive dentistry, dental materials, anesthesia and pain control, oral anatomy, oral histology, oral physiology, oral pathology, morphology, pharmacology, microbiology, chairside assisting, legal/ethical aspects of dentistry, radiology and radiation safety, sterilization/infection control, laboratory procedures, office emergency procedures, general dentistry, and specialty dentistry including, but not limited to, endodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, periodontics, and prosthodontics.

(5) Armamentarium

(A) The number and variety of hand instruments shall be sufficient to instruct students in identifying and exchanging instruments, preparing procedural trays, and assisting in the diagnostic, operative and specialty procedures which are a part of general dentistry.

(B) Each student shall possess a pair of safety goggles for their exclusive use.

(C) One permanently preassembled tray for each procedure shall be provided for reference purposes. In addition, at least one set of hand instruments per chairside procedure for every two students shall be available during instruction of clinical, pre-clinical, and laboratory procedures.

(D) There shall be at least one functional typodont and bench mount for every two students, or comparable equipment if approved in advance by the Board. Each typodont shall have full dentition and soft gingivae.

(6) Infection Control. The program shall establish written pre-clinical, clinical, and laboratory protocols to ensure adequate asepsis, infection and hazard control, and disposal of hazardous wastes, which shall comply with the board's regulations and other Federal, State, and local requirements. The program shall provide such protocols to all students, faculty, and appropriate staff to assure compliance with such protocols. Adequate space shall be provided for preparing and sterilizing all armamentarium. All reusable armamentarium shall be sterilized, and a non-reusable items disposed of properly.

(7) Emergency Materials/Basic Life Support.

(A) A written policy on managing emergency situations must be made available to all students, faculty, and staff. Emergency materials shall include, but not be limited to, an oxygen tank which is readily available and functional. Medical materials for treating patients with life-threatening conditions must be available for instruction and accessible to the operatories. Facilities which do not treat patients must maintain a working model of a kit of such emergency materials for instructional purposes.

(B) All students, faculty, and staff involved in the direct provision of patient care must be certified in basic life support procedures, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Recertification intervals may not exceed two years. The program must document, monitor, and ensure compliance by such students, faculty, and staff, and keep a record of those who are not required to maintain such certification because they are medically or physically unable to perform such procedures.

(i) Program Content. The organization of the curriculum shall be balanced and flexible, creating opportunities for adjustments to changes in the practice of dentistry and registered dental assisting.

(1) Sufficient time shall be available for all students to obtain laboratory experience to achieve minimum competence in all dental assistant and registered dental assistant duties prior to the performance of procedures on patients.

(2) A detailed course outline shall be provided which clearly states curriculum subject matter and specific instruction hours for each topic in the individual areas of didactic, laboratory, pre-clinical, clinical, and externship instruction.

(3) There shall be no more than 14 students per instructor during laboratory instruction. There shall be no more than 6 students per instructor during pre-clinical and clinical instruction.

(4) Programs that admit students at different phases shall provide students with an orientation which shall include anatomy, tooth numbering, and universal precautions, including instrument sterilization, and which shall be successfully completed prior to participation in any other phase of the program.

(5) General program objectives and specific instructional unit objectives shall be stated in writing, and shall include theoretical aspects of each subject as well as practical application. The theoretical aspects of the program shall provide the content necessary for students to make judgments regarding the procedures which dental assistants and registered dental assistants are allowed to perform and to anticipate a dentist's needs during procedures performed in the practice of dentistry. The program shall assure that students who successfully complete the program can perform all dental assistant and registered dental assistant duties with minimum competence.

(6) Objective evaluation criteria shall be used for measuring student progress toward attainment of specific course objectives. Students shall be provided with specific unit objectives and the evaluation criteria that will be used for all aspects of the curriculum including written and practical examinations. The program shall establish a standard of performance which states the minimum number of satisfactory performances which are required for each procedure.

(7) Areas of didactic and laboratory demonstration instruction shall include at least the

following:

(A) Biomedical - Dental-Medical Emergencies, Basic Life Support, Nutrition and Preventive Dentistry;

(B) Dental Science - Dental Materials, Oral Anatomy and Physiology, Oral Pathology, Pharmacology, Morphology and Microbiology;

(C) Dental Assisting - General and Specialty Dentistry, Chairside Assisting, Legal/Ethical Aspects of Dentistry; Patient Management; Infection Control;

(D) All functions dental assistants and registered dental assistants are allowed to perform by statute or regulation.

(j) Externship Instruction. Students shall, as part of an organized program of instruction, be provided with planned, supervised clinical instruction in performing all dental assistant and registered dental assistant duties.

(1) The program director/coordinator or a dental faculty member shall be responsible for selecting extern clinical sites and evaluating student competence in performing procedures both before and after the clinical assignment.

(2) Objective evaluation criteria shall be used by the program faculty and clinic personnel.

(3) Program faculty shall visit each extramural clinical facility at least once every ten clinical days.

(4) Dentists who intend to provide extramural clinical practices shall be oriented by the program director/coordinator or a dental faculty member prior to the student assignment. Orientation shall include the objectives of the program, the preparation the student has had for the clinical assignment, and a review of procedures and criteria to be used by the dentist in evaluating the student during the assignment.

(5) There shall be a written contract of affiliation with each extramural clinical facility utilized by the program. Such contract shall describe the settings in which the clinical training will be received, affirm that the clinical facility has the necessary equipment and armamentarium appropriate for the procedures to be performed, and affirm that such equipment and armamentarium are in safe operating condition.

(6) The program shall maintain documentation that students completed clinical training in all dental assisting and registered dental assisting functions during the clinical externship phase of the program.

Note: Authority cited: Section 1614, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Section 1753, Business and Professions Code.